

## Selected Story.

## A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

Miss Abigail sat straight upright in bed. It was too dark to see anything, but she listened with all the intension of a maiden lady's midnight ears.

She had heard something. The noise was repeated. It was the sharp icy crackling made by a diamond cutting glass.

Miss Abigail softly slid from the bed, and felt noiselessly about with her bare feet until she touched her quilted and beribboned bedroom slippers. Leaning forward, she put them on, and reached out to the foot of the bed for her dressing-robe. Just as her hand touched its fleecy brittle crack warned her to lose no time. She put on the robe and knotted its silk cord in front, listening keenly meanwhile for what she knew would be the next sound in the long-expected and often-rehearsed series.

A muffled scraping assured her that the burglar, having removed the pane of glass, was pushing back the window-catch.

"I must make haste!" whispered Miss Abigail.

Stepping with catlike silence across the room, she opened the top drawer of her bureau, and laid her hand upon the revolver in the front right-hand corner. Then from behind a portrait of the Admiral, her father, she drew forth a small dark-lantern. Meanwhile her quickened hearing followed the whole process of raising the window, though it was on the floor below. Two deadened thumps, barely distinguishable at that distance, called out a whispered comment from the lady:

"Awkward boor!—he jumped in!"

With a sulphur match she lighted the lantern, saw that it burn freely, and then softly drew the slide. The light, that had shone brightly for but an instant, became condensed into a single bright ray as she closed the front of the lantern, and disappeared totally when the slide was drawn.

Miss Abigail then retired to the side of her room furthest from the door, and seated herself in a favorite rocking-chair. Cautious footsteps brushed to and fro upon the floor downstairs.

"He must think I'm a fool if he expects to find the silver downstairs!" remarked Miss Abigail, under her breath. She was becoming impatient; inaction was a nervous state to her. Presently her brows relaxed in the darkness. She heard the burglar coming up stairs. He paused at her door; she heard him breathing. Then she felt a cold draught about her ankles. He had opened the door.

"That," Miss Abigail reflected, "shows that he has prepared a way of escape downstairs. The cold draught shows that beyond a doubt." A sniffing sound gave her another thought. "He smells the tin of my lantern—and its odor certainly is not pleasant!" she admitted to herself. "But it's no time to be fussy. Here goes!" Then, snapping back the lantern slide and leveling the revolver, Miss Abigail said, sharply:

"Put up your hands!"

She had pointed lantern rays and revolver at the foot of the bed, and her judgment had been correct. Lighted as by a calcium ray, there stood within the illumined circle a tall thin man, closely buttoned into a frock-coat, which (as Miss Abigail noted even then) was very shiny, and lacked two buttons. His hands hung at his sides, and his mouth was wide open. His jaw had dropped.

"Put up your hands!" The repeated command brought him to his senses.

"Well, I'm d—"

"Don't you swear; and put up your hands—or I'll blow your brains out," added Miss Abigail, so coolly that the man's hands went up.

"She's a regular—" the man began, but was interrupted.

"Hush!" Miss Abigail. "I will do the talking just now. Go sit down. There's a chair back of you; but keep your hands up."

The man backed slowly until he struck a chair with his heels. He looked around to make certain of its position, and then sat down.

Miss Abigail had kept both lantern and revolver accurately ranged upon the moving figure. The burglar had not been unmindful of this, as his next question showed.

"Beg pard'n, m'm—" he began, softly, and waited to see whether he might go on.

"Yes?"

"But are you Miss Oakley?"

"Miss who?"

"Miss Oakley, m'm—that shoots in the Wild West, m'm—Buffalo Bill's, m'm?"

Miss Abigail was not above taking a suggestion from the enemy. "Then you've seen me shoot?" she inquired, easily.

"Oh, yes, m'm," said the burglar. "I seen you bustin' glass balls only a month ago. And it was done beautiful. I didn't know it was your house, m'm. Indeed I didn't, or I wouldn't 'a' dared—"

"Put up your hands!"

"Oh, yes, m'm! I forgot; truly I did, Miss Oakley—if you are Miss Oakley."

"What weapons have you?" asked Miss Abigail.

"I've got a bull-dog revolver, m'm."

"Oh! Well, now I'm going to step around behind you. Then you get up when I tell you, and march over to the wall, and stand there. Don't you look around."

"No, m'm. I know when I'm beat. I aint goin' to give no trouble, only

I'd like to tell you how I come here."

"All in good time," said Miss Abigail, serenely, as she took a wide circle and came behind her prisoner, keeping him well covered. "Now get up and march."

The burglar rose, still with his arms extended, and marched slowly to the wall.

"Next, you may fold your arms," said his captor.

"All right, m'm. I've done it often," remarked the burglar. "It's the regular penitentiary racket."

"I know it," said Miss Abigail. "That is what I've heard."

As the burglar folded his arms, Miss Abigail touched an electric button, and its quivering tinkle was heard coming from the upper floor.

"My maid will be down in a few minutes," said Miss Abigail, seating herself in the chair the burglar had left. "Meanwhile we must wait. Is there anything you wish to say to me?"

"Only to explain how it came that I thought of helpin' myself to your silver," the burglar remarked, without moving. "The fact is, I'm pretty well broke."

"Why don't you get some honest work to do?"

"Don't like it," said the burglar, very frankly. "Never could stand bein' bossed round by another man. I don't mind a lady's doin' it—specially when she's handy with a revolver."

"No nonsense now," said Miss Abigail, with dignity.

"Beg pard'n, m'm; no offence, I hope. I only meant to say that I took to burglary because I enjoy it. I'm not one of the snivelling kind, anyhow. I'm a burglar, and I'm proud of it."

"You haven't much to be proud of tonight," said Miss Abigail sharply.

"Oh, the night's not over yet," said the burglar, easily. "I've got out of worse fixes than this."

Miss Abigail began to be a little uneasy.

"I won't have any nonsense," she said, abruptly.

"Don't be disturbed," said the burglar, reassuringly. "I won't hurt you."

"I should think not!" responded Miss Abigail, indignantly.

"But I mean to get out of this scrape," said the burglar. "I don't mean to do anything that will bring me into the electricity chair, m'm; but I'm going to get away."

Miss Abigail said no more, but she became impatient for the appearance of the maid. She rang the bell again.

Footsteps came along the hall, and there was a knock at the door.

"Come in!" said Miss Abigail, in a tone of great relief.

The maid entered, and for a moment stood speechless surveying the group of two—the man facing the wall, and Miss Abigail sitting on guard with lantern and revolver.

"Lucinda," said Miss Abigail, "light the gas."

"But—" the maid began.

"Light the gas," repeated her mistress.

Lucinda found a match, and in a moment more the rays of the lantern were lost in the general illumination.

"Now," said Miss Abigail, "this man is a robber—a burglar."

"Oh!" shrieked the maid.

"Don't be silly! said Abigail, impatiently; "but listen. He has a revolver in his right-hand pocket."

"If you please, m'm," remarked the burglar, "can't you let me give you the revolver. My arms are so stiff that I—"

"Silence!" broke in his captor. "That will come in good time. As I said, Lucinda, he has a revolver, and we must get it. You go over and take it out of his pocket, and if he moves I'll make him wish he hadn't."

"Miss Abigail, I'd like to oblige you," the maid protested earnestly, "but I don't dare. I don't—really and truly!"

"Well, then," said Miss Abigail, impatiently, "what good are you? I can't keep the man here all night. Suppose you take the revolver, then, and I'll disarm him."

"If I might make a suggestion," the burglar remarked, with deference, "I would say—"

"Hush!" said Miss Abigail, sharply. "Do you think, Lucinda, you could hit him with the revolver?"

"No, ma'am," said Lucinda. "I know I couldn't. Why, I'm shaking all over! I couldn't hit anything—even if I knew how to fire the gun—and I don't. Shan't I go for an officer?"

"You know, Lucinda," said Miss Abigail, scornfully, "that there isn't a policeman within five miles. The burglar knows it too, I'll warrant."

"Yes, m'm," the burglar murmured. And then he went on, hastily, "I was goin' to suggest—please don't stop me, m'm—that I have no objection to giving up the building—"

"Bull-dog!" Lucinda exclaimed. "Only my pistol, miss," the burglar went on. "I have reasons for wantin' to get rid of it. Now if you'll let me unfold my arms a minute I'll put my coat on the floor, and the young lady—I mean Miss Lucinda, m'm—she can pick it up. Have I your consent, m'm?"

"Yes," said Miss Abigail, after a short pause. She didn't see any way out of the difficulty without some risk.

Very slowly, and like a conjurer who demonstrates that all is to be fair and above board, the burglar relaxed his arms, took his coat by the lapels, and drew it off. He then allowed it to fall to the floor. The revolver proved its presence by a heavy thud as it reached the ground. The burglar then resumed his former position, with folded arms.

"Go and get the coat, Lucinda," said Miss Abigail.

Lucinda summoned all her courage, made a short rush across the room, snatched the coat, and scurried back. She dropped the coat at Miss Abigail's feet.

"Is that your only weapon?" asked Miss Abigail.

"Yes, m'm," said the burglar. "I don't mean to give you any trouble at all. I know when a man—or a lady—gets the best on me. Now, m'm, if you'll kindly take the bull-dog out of my pocket, I'd rather put on my coat again."

"Lucinda, take the revolver out of the coat," Miss Abigail said.

"But I'm afraid to touch it," Lucinda said, timidly.

"Nonsense!" said her mistress; "hand the coat to me."

Lucinda lifted the coat, and Miss Abigail removed the revolver from the pocket, laying it upon a small table at her side. Then she threw the coat across the room, and the burglar stooped, picked it up, and began to put it on.

"Now, m'm," he said, moving slowly around to face Miss Abigail, "I haven't any weapons, and you've got the best of me. If you'll kindly lower the point of your gun, I'll say a few words to you before I go."

He leaned easily against the wall, putting his hands into his trousers pockets.

Miss Abigail eyed him for a few seconds, and then slowly lowered her revolver. She still kept it ready for use, however.

"Are you a coward?" Miss Abigail asked, suddenly. "Why did you give up your pistol so readily?"

"If you won't get mad," said the burglar, smiling, "I'll tell you."

"I can keep my temper," said Miss Abigail, with some reserve. "Proceed."

"It's like this," said the man. "You see, you're a woman. A very spirited kind of a woman—but still a woman. Now, women are queer. They are always afraid of guns."

Miss Abigail brightened herself. "I don't wish to offend you, you know, but it's a fact," the burglar went on. "I've been knockin' round the world quite a piece, and women are always afraid of guns. That's what I called you Miss Oakley. It was to kind of give you confidence, and make you think I was scared. See? Then I knew you wouldn't be taking a shot at me before you thought. I gave up my bull-dog, so's you wouldn't be scared. I wanted you to have plenty of confidence. You see, I'm an old hand at this business. And I'll take a chair if you don't mind."

Before Miss Abigail could collect herself he had drawn up a chair and seated himself.

"Sit down, Lucinda," he remarked.

Miss Abigail gasped, but Lucinda docilely seated herself on the edge of Miss Abigail's bed.

"I had a pal once," said the burglar, apparently quite at his ease. "He got shot by a woman in a lady like you. She had a gun—just as you have—and plenty of nerve—same as you. And instead of puttin' up his hands, as the lady requested him (in words to that effect; she hadn't it quite so put as you, m'm), he tried to draw his gun. Well, o' course she poked him."

"Poked him?" inquired Miss Abigail.

"Yes, m'm; through the lung. I got him away while the lady was faintin', but he never recovered. He became a gardener or something, and died of it."

"But—" began Miss Abigail.

"Just a moment more and I'll go," said the burglar. "You see, he didn't know how a woman with a gun should be treated. Now my way is like I've shown you. If the lady gets the drop on you, put up your hands. Make her think you're scared. Give her all the rope she'll take, until she is quiet and cool—just as you are now, m'm. Then when you're certain she's quiet and not a bit scared—why, then you know she hasn't the heart to fire a gun at a live man, even if he is a professional. So now, m'm, being sure you don't mean to murder a man in cold blood when all he wants is to get quietly out of the way, I'll bid you a very pleasant—good-night."

And at the word the burglar rose, and sauntered coolly across the room toward the two women. Miss Abigail raised her revolver from her lap, but the burglar only smiled at her and paused. The revolver dropped again.

With a nod the burglar went to the door, opened it, passed through, closed the door again, and then ran down the stairs as fast as his feet would carry him.

The women remained speechless until they heard the front door close. Then Lucinda said:

"Why, he's forgotten his revolver!"

"You're right," said Miss Abigail. "Why don't you show some spirit?"

"What could I do?" Lucinda said, beginning to cry.

"There, there!" remarked Miss Abigail. "I'm glad he's gone. I didn't know what in the world to do with him, and he knew I didn't, the rascal! Oh, who would be a woman?"—[Tudor Jenks in Harper's Weekly.]

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PASSUMPSIC DIVISION

WINTER ARRANGEMENT, JAN. 21, '94.

Trains Leave St. Johnsbury, GOING SOUTH.

For Concord, Manchester, Nashua, Lowell and Boston via White River Junction, 12.30 and 9.00 a. m., arriving at Boston 8.02 a. m., 4.45 p. m.

For Concord, Manchester, Nashua, Lowell and Boston via Wells River and Plymouth, 1.40 a. m. (daily), 9.00 a. m., 2.55 p. m. Arriving at Boston, 8.05 a. m., 4.45, 8.35 p. m.

For Bellows Falls, Northampton, Springfield, Hartford, New Haven and New York, 12.30 and 9.00 a. m.

For Newbury, Bradford, Norwich and White River Junction, 12.30 a. m., 9.00 a. m., and 6.08 p. m.

For Passumpsic, Barnet and Melndoes, 9.00 a. m. and 6.08 p. m.

For Wells River, 12.30 a. m., 1.40 a. m., 9.00 a. m. and 2.55 p. m.

For Montpelier and Littleton 9 a. m., 2.35 p. m.

GOING NORTH.

For Lyndonville and Newport, 2.22 a. m., 3.15 a. m., 10.50 a. m., 3.10 p. m., 4.45 p. m.

For West Burke, Barton and Barton Landing, 3.15 a. m., 10.50 a. m., 4.43 p. m.

For Stansfeld and Derby Line, Massawippi, North Hatley, Lennoxville and Sherbrooke, 3.15 and 10.50 a. m.

For Quebec via Sherbrooke and Grand Trunk Ry., 3.15 a. m.

For Quebec via Sherbrooke and Quebec Central Ry., 3.15 a. m.

For Montreal via Sherbrooke and Grand Trunk Ry., 3.15 a. m.

For Montreal via Newport and Canadian Pacific Ry., 2.22 a. m. (daily), 3.10 p. m.

D. W. SANBORN, H. E. FOLSOM, Gen. Supt. Div. Supt.

January 22, 1894.

CONCORD & MONTREAL R. R.

Passenger Service from St. Johnsbury.

For Woodsville, Plymouth, Laconia, Tilton, Concord, Manchester, Nashua, Lowell and Boston, 1.40 (ex.), 9.00 a. m., 2.35 (ex.) p. m. Arrive Boston 8.02 a. m., 4.45, 8.35 p. m.

Sundays 1.40 a. m., arrive Boston 8.02 a. m.

The 1.40 a. m. train (daily) has through passenger and sleeping cars.

For St. Johnsbury via Plymouth and Wells River, 9.00 (ex.) a. m., 8.00 (ex.) p. m. Sundays 8.00 p. m.

Leave Lowell 9.45 (ex.) a. m., 8.40 (ex.) p. m. Sundays 8.45 p. m.

Leave Nashua 10.12 (ex.) a. m., 9.07 (ex.) p. m. Sundays 9.07 p. m.

Leave Manchester 10.41 (ex.) a. m., 9.37 (ex.) p. m. Sundays 9.37 p. m.

Leave Concord 11.20 (ex.) a. m., 10.15 (ex.) p. m. Sundays 10.15 p. m.

Arr. St. Johnsbury 3.10 p. m., 2.17 a. m.

The 9.00 a. m. train from Boston week days and the 2.17 a. m. train (daily) have through passenger and sleeping cars.

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Winter Arrangement, Nov. 19, 1893.

Trains Leave St. Johnsbury, GOING WEST.

For Danville, Hardwick, Morrisville, Cambridge Junction, Barre, Burlington, St. Albans and Rutland 7.30 a. m.

For Danville, West Danville, Walden, Greensboro, East Hardwick, Hardwick, Morrisville and Rutland, 7.32 a. m., 3.40 p. m., and 4.50 p. m.

For Johnson, Cambridge Junction, Burlington, Fletcher, Fairfield, Sheldon, Highgate and Swanton, 3.40 p. m.

For Stanbridge, St. John and Montreal via East Swanton, 3.40 p. m.

GOING EAST.

For East St. Johnsbury, North Concord, Miles Pond and Lunenburg, 2.30 a. m., 2.45 p. m., 4.55 p. m. (mixed).

For Whitefield, Palsburg, Crawford, Glen, North Conway, Fryeburg, Portland, Brunswick, Lewiston, Augusta, Waterville, Bangor and St. John, 2.30 a. m., 2.45 p. m.

For Boston via North Conway, 2.30 a. m. H. E. FOLSOM, D. J. FLANDERS, Supt. Gen. Pass. Agt.

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a. m. p. m. p. m. p. m. p. m.

Lancaster 4.30, 12.30, 3.30, 5.05, 7.30

Jefferson 5.50, 12.47, 3.45, 5.45, 7.45

Quebec Jct. 4.00, 1.00, 4.00, 6.10, 8.00

Whitefield 5.00, 1.20, 8.20

St. Johnsbury 5.20, 1.30, 8.32